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National Archives of Canada Act (NACA) complements the MGIH Policy. Page number citations refer to MGIH; Subsection citations are to NACA.

Objectives Match

At the highest level, MGIH speaks of "cost-effective and coordinated management of federal government information holdings" ("Policy Objective," p. 3).

Similarly, the NACA tells the Archives "to facilitate the management of records of government institutions and of ministerial records" (Subsection 4.(1), "Objects and Functions").

The Act makes specific mention of records of permanent value — the culmination of the life cycle of information. The National Archives is required "to conserve ... public records of national significance and facilitate access thereto, [and] to be the permanent repository of records of government institutions and of ministerial records" (Subsection 4.(1)). MGIH emphasizes that it is the policy of the government to "identify and conserve information holdings that serve to reconstruct the evolution of policy and program decisions or have archival or historical importance" ("Policy Statement," p. 3).

Policy Instruments Complementary

The broad parallelism of the MGIH and the NACA carries through to several specific areas. The following paragraphs will point out, first, the related mandatory provisions of the Policy and the Act; second, the discretionary powers of the National Archivist to help institutions meet the requirements of MGIH; and third, a delegated task, not mentioned in the Act, that the MGIH sets for the National Archives. Finally,

there is one aspect of the Act on which MGIH is silent.

Scheduling of Information Mandatory

MGIH requires government institutions to "ensure that all information, as identified in the corporate inventory, is scheduled for retention and disposal" (p. 7). Later, in its "Guidelines," MGIH also notes the crucial importance of Subsections 5.(1) and 6.(1) of the NACA which "establish the authority of the National Archives to control the destruction and disposal of the information holdings of government institutions, excluding published material, and the transfer of information of historic or archival importance to the National Archives" (p. 18).

The MGIH "Guidelines" also cite two special categories of institutional holdings. First, "institutions are responsible for transferring personnel information" on former civilian and military employees to the Personnel Records Centre of the National Archives (p. 19). Second, retention and disposal requirements extend to any institutional information holdings located inside a minister's office (p. 19-20).

Assistance Discretionary

The Act permits the National Archivist to "do such things as are incidental or conducive" to fulfilling his mandate (Subsection 4.(2)). Of the dozen examples cited, many are vital to helping institutions meet the requirements of MGIH. Two deal with provision of central storage facilities for government records in general (the Federal Records Centres) and for personnel records of the government's former civilian and military employees (the Personnel Records Centre) (Paragraphs 4.(2)(h),(i)). Four others en-

New Policy Parallels National Archives of Canada Act

"The requirement to know what information we hold, and to be able to identify and locate this information, is our greatest challenge." This was part of the message from Gérard Veilleux, then Secretary of the Treasury Board, to deputy heads last August when he outlined the newly-approved Management of Government Information Holdings Policy (MGIH) to them. Part of a planned package of three policies and various standards, "It represents an integration and rationalization of all previous policies in this area," wrote Veilleux.

As the policy itself notes, "Legislation relevant to this policy includes ... the *National Archives of Canada Act*." This article points out those areas where the

courage the Archives to provide advice, training, and other services for the management of records and to engage in joint projects ((f),(g),(j), and (k)). And four other examples cover activities related to archival records: acquisition and custody (a), intellectual control and physical conservation (b), access (c), and advisory and other services (d).

Each of these examples has counterparts in the MGIH, suggesting that institutions look to the National Archives for various forms of assistance.

Institutions' Needs Served

Advice and training, for example, may help institutions as they develop and maintain their "classification system or systems" intended to organize and locate information and incorporate it in a comprehensive inventory (p. 4). In fact, consultant advice, guidance via publications, and training touch on all phases of the life cycle of recorded information.

National Archives services extend to information that institutions hold off-site in Federal Records Centres. For instance, institutions use the Centres to "protect essential information holdings" (p. 6). They also realize savings through "low cost record and tape storage facilities" for information that is not required frequently and for backups of electronic media (p. 17).

Finally, by instructing government institutions to document "the evolution of

policy and program decisions" (p. 3) by means of "institutional histories, case studies and profiles" (p. 20), MGIH will cause institutions to seek and interpret information on their past activities. In many cases, this information will already have been acquired, conserved, and organized for research purposes by the National Archives.

Responsibility for Monitoring Delegated

As noted earlier, the MGIH delegates an important task to the National Archives that is not mentioned in the Act.

Consistent with former policy, the MGIH asks the National Archives to accept "specific evaluation responsibilities on behalf of Treasury Board Secretariat in regard to this policy" and invites the National Archives to "report on significant problems or issues in the state of management of information holdings relevant to their identification, organization, storage, conservation, retention and disposal" (p. 7).

The Archives has been involved in various ways with evaluations in approximately sixty government institutions since 1983. It is now examining the focus for evaluation appropriate to its role under MGIH and the NACA.

Ministerial Records Fall under NACA

Finally, because they are "not under the control of a government institution"

(Section 2), ministerial records are outside the scope of MGIH. However, they do fall within the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the NACA. Briefly, ministerial records may not be destroyed without the consent of the National Archivist (Subsection 5.1). Those that he deems to be of permanent value must be transferred to the care of the National Archives (Subsection 6.1).

The Archives provides advice, publishes guidelines, and offers training to staff of ministers' offices and to institutional employees who deal with this type of information.

A Continuing Relationship

The relationship between the Treasury Board Secretariat and the National Archives spans several decades of managing government records. This relationship continues and evolves under Treasury Board's new policy. A broad framework consistent with Increased Ministerial Authority and Accountability, MGIH replaces former policies of a medium-specific nature that spelled out a multitude of directives. Nevertheless, MGIH too will eventually be supported by standards. Future standards and suggested practices and procedures pertinent to the broad field of information management will build on the foundation laid by the Management of Government Information Holdings Policy, the *National Archives of Canada Act*, and the other relevant policies and statutes. ■



New Federal Records Centre in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, a suburb of Quebec City.

■ National Archives Opens Quebec City Centre

A new Federal Records Centre, located at St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, a suburb of Quebec City, has begun to serve federal institutions in eastern Quebec.

This location was chosen after a survey of 29 federal departments with a significant presence in the region. The region extends from Lac St-Jean to the Côte Nord, and from Bas St-Laurent to the Gaspésie, and includes part of the

Estrie and Mauricie regions. The Federal Records Centre (FRC) will serve the major taxation centres in Jonquière and Shawinigan. It will also accommodate recorded information now held by the large number of federal offices in Quebec City and its immediate surroundings. For example, the new facility expects to serve Health and Welfare Canada, which now holds over 3,000 metres of records in the Quebec City region.

The new centre, with 7,800 square metres of floor space, includes an environmentally controlled vault for the storage of up to 49,500 computer tapes, microfilm reels, and other plastic-based media, and will have a storage capacity of 60,000 linear metres for paper media. At just over three boxes per metre, this translates into 197,000 standard FRC boxes of records.

As an indication of the urgent need for economical records storage and related services, Ted van Leyen, Director of the Federal Records Centres, estimates that the new centre will already have holdings of about 30,000 linear metres by the end of the fiscal year. ■

National Archives Report to Treasury Board

The quality of submissions requesting authority to dispose of records has improved markedly in the past year, Jean-Pierre Wallot reported to the Secretary of the Treasury Board in August. The comment was part of the National Archivist's annual report to the Treasury Board on the Management of Government Records.

During the year, the National Archivist approved 26 submissions, many of them large and complex. Seventeen of these submissions covered paper records only, two dealt with electronic records only, and three covered both paper and electronic records. The remaining four submissions dealt with microform, audio-visual, or photographic records. Further, the number of submissions that were returned to departments and agencies

for improvement was less than half the number returned in the previous year.

"This year shows the first results of my determination to have submissions address electronic records and, where records about a program or activity exist in both paper and electronic form, to have both media covered where this is necessary for a sound archival assessment," Wallot told the Treasury Board.

National Archives of Canada Helps Preserve Fragile Electronic Records

Information of historical value stored on electronic records can easily be lost or destroyed, the National Archivist continued. Wallot noted that records on electronic media can be lost if the medium is unstable, if there is insufficient documentation to permit physical or intellectual access, or if the hardware or software has changed.

National Archives staff are working with information professionals in several government institutions to enhance the institutions' capability to identify, retain, conserve, and dispose of their automated records holdings.

International standards for the interoperability of systems may eventually help information managers acquire and preserve machine-readable records without also acquiring a collection of obsolete computerware. The Archives has already received a report it commissioned about "applications portability." It has also received a report on the impact that adopting the "Information Resource Dictionary Standard" would have on identifying and describing automated records. ■

Information and Privacy Reports — Impact on Information Managers

"Under the control of a government institution" — this phrase legally

defines the information holdings that are subject to both the *Access to Information (ATI)* and *Privacy Acts*. Clearly, the proper control of recorded information is a prerequisite for efficient *ATIP* operations. Conversely, some *ATIP* difficulties are rooted in information management problems.

This relationship makes the annual reports to Parliament of the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner particularly interesting to the information management community.

From this point of view, the reports for 1988-1989 emphasize three pertinent areas of concern: inadequate description of information; processing delays; and unjustified retention of information.

Description of Information

It is important for government institutions to know at the corporate level what information is under their control and to describe it "in sufficient detail to facilitate the exercise of the right of access." The President of the Treasury Board, the designated minister under both *Acts*, is required by law to produce on an annual basis a publication describing classes of records, in the case of *ATI*, and personal information banks, in the case of *Privacy* legislation. The resulting descriptions, the *Access Register* and the *Index of Personal Information*, are available primarily through the public library system and departmental reading rooms. They represent an important initial point of contact between the government and Canadians seeking information.

Last year, the Privacy Commissioner's Compliance Directorate conducted an audit of six institutions to examine various aspects of compliance including the accuracy and completeness of listings in the *Personal Information Index*. The auditors identified five bank descriptions where personal information was inadequate and two groups of files containing personal information that were not listed. Two erroneous statements concerning the applicability of the *Act* and the institution responsible for controlling a certain bank were also found.

Delays in Response Time

A second requirement of *ATIP* legislation calls for institutions to provide accurate information in a timely manner. The institution must be able to justify a response time of more than 30 days.

The inability to retrieve information quickly causes delays in the access process. Indeed, the Information Commissioner's report identifies delay as a major problem: there were 362 delay and extension complaints representing 38 per cent of all complaints.

Sixty per cent of these were found to be justified. Under the *ATI* Act, access delayed is access denied.

The annual report does not single out poor retrieval systems as a major cause of delay but it does mention it as "a contributing factor." One case summary describes a three-month search for a ten-page document.

Delays accounted for 40 per cent of the complaints lodged with the Privacy Commissioner. The annual report does not indicate how many of these are attributable to inadequate retrieval systems.

Retention of Personal Information

Treasury Board policy calls for personal information to be retained and disposed of in accordance with schedules that the National Archivist approves. Auditors of the Privacy Commissioner's Office identified as problem areas unscheduled information banks, inappropriate retention periods, and the practice of retaining personal information longer than approved retention periods. ■

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LA CONSERVATION DES RENSEIGNEMENTS PERSONNELS

Sur le rapport annuel, les pilotes systèmes de localisation ne sont pas entièrement responsables des délais de livraison et de distribution. On cite un cas mais « y contribuent ». On peut il à la fois effectuer des recherches documentaires et trouver un document de dix pages.

l'incapacité de trouver les renseignements rapidement et le processus d'accès à l'information entraîne un grave problème : 362 plaintes sont déposées au sein de l'Informatisation. En fait, dans le seul département du Québec, on précise que les détails du problème sont : 362 plaintes, soit 88 pour 100 des plaintes régulières, pour 100 de ces plaintes trop longs délais, soit 60 pour 100 des plaintes régulières, pour 100 de ces plaintes trop longs délais et 60 pour 100 de ces plaintes régulières, pour 100 de ces plaintes trop longs délais. Ces plaintes sont déposées au refus de divulguer les renseignements demandés.

les deux lois exigent également que les institutions fédérales produisent des renseignements exacts dans un délai raisonnable. L'établissement doit être en mesure de justifier un délai supérieur à 30 jours.

Les délais

... au démerier, la Division de l'observation du Bureau du Commissariat à la protection de la vie privée a effectué une vérification dans six institutions pour déterminer si l'on a respecté les dispositions légales, notamment l'exacititude et la complétude des listes du Répertoire des renseignements personnels. Les effectifs autorisés ont relevé dans les établissements que les deux groupes de personnes concernant l'applicabilité de la Loi et les deux groupes de personnes éligibles étaient en nombre équivalent. La présence de deux groupes de personnes dans les deux établissements démontre que l'application de la loi n'a pas été perturbée par la présence de deux groupes de personnes éligibles.

La description des réseigne-

Par conséquent, les rapports annuels présentés au Parlement par les commissions à l'information et à la protection de la vie privée présentent un intérêt particulier pour les gestionnaires de l'information et pour les gestionnaires de l'information.

Les trois grands problèmes relevés à la gestion de l'information : la description inadéquate des renseignements, les détails pour le traitement des demandes et la non-divulgation injustifiée des renseignements.

Deux rapports à lire

■ nombreux systèmes informatiques desus. Les Archives nationales ont déjà reçu le rapport sur la transférabilité des applications qui elles avaient commandé. Elles ont également reçu un rapport sur les expéressions qu'aurait l'adoption de la norme concernant le répertoire des ressources documentaires sur Internet. La difficulté de la description des documents informatiques.

Il se pourra que les normes internationales applicables à l'interécoulement des documents issibles par machine permettent des systèmes puissants en leur sein pour assurer la sécurité et la confidentialité des informations pour la transmission et l'interécoulement des documents issibles par machine.

Le personnel des Archives nationales travaille de concert avec des spécialistes de l'information dans plusieurs institutions fédérées en vue d'accroître la capacité de celles-ci à dénicher, garder, conserver et éliminer des documents informatifs.

Préservation des documents électroniques fragiles

M. Wallot précise : « J'avais exprimé clairement ma volonté de voir les demandes tenir compte des documents électroniques et, dans les cas où les documents lîsés au programme sont des documents lîsés, je vois des résultats concrets. »

Rappoport des Archives nationales au Conseil du Trésor

Le nouveau centre fédéral de documents à Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures en banlieue de Québec.



Pour donner une idée de l'amplitude des besoins en logiciels pour l'échange de documents économiques des entreprises et en services connexes, Ted van Leyen, directeur des centres fédéraux de documents et de documents commerciaux pour l'Europe, a estimé qu'environ 30 000 mètres linéaires de documents seront entreposés dans le nouveau centre d'ici la fin de l'année financière. ■

L'immobile, d'une superficie de 7 800 mètres carrés, comprend un entrepot à 49 500 bandes pour ordinateurs contiguës pouvant contenir jusqu'à 49 500 bandes pour ordinateur, bobines de microfilm et autres documents support plastique et une aire d'entreposage pouvant abriter 60 000 mètres linéaires de documents imprimés. En complément un peu plus de trois boîtes le mètre, on pourra y entreposer 197 000 bouteilles standard CFD.

L'empêclement a été choisi après une enquête effectuée auprès de 29 ministères fédéraux qui jouent un rôle actif dans la région, qui s'étend du lac Saint-Jean à la côte Nord du Bas-Saint-Laurent à la Gaspésie incluant une partie de l'est de la Mauricie. Le Centre fédéral de l'est et de la Mauricie, qui possède 3 000 mètres de documents le et du Bien-être social, ailleurs de l'ordre de 10 000, a été chargé de mettre en place un nouveau centre de service à Sainte-Justine. Ce centre desservira entre autres les environnements immobiliers et dans les domaines culturels et sportifs. Ce nouveau centre sera également chargé de mettre en place un programme de formation et de recherche dans les domaines culturels et sportifs. Ce nouveau centre sera également chargé de mettre en place un programme de formation et de recherche dans les domaines culturels et sportifs.

On trouve dans cette dernière partie des documents, suite à Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, en banlieue de Québec, est maintenu au service des institutions fédérales de l'Est du Québec.

Les Archives nationales ouvrent un centre fédéral de documents à Québec

Des relations soutenues

Les Archives nationales donnent des conclusions, publient des lignes directrices et offrent des cours de formation au personnel des cours des institutions dédiées aux employés des ministères et des organismes consacrés dans les cabinets des ministres.

Finalelement, page qu'il ne soit pas « des documents des institutions fédératives » (article 2), les documents ministérielles ne sont pas visés par la disposition collective, Cependant, ils sont assujettis aux dispositions obligatoires et discrétionnaires de la loi. Pour des raisons de sécurité nationale (paragraphe 5(1)), les documents ministérielles détruites ou détruisées doivent être détruites dans l'autorisation de l'archiviste national (paragraphe 5(1)). Les documents ministérielles sont archivés aux archives nationales (para-

Les documents ministériels

ment l'orientation qu'elles doivent donner à l'évaluation complète tenue du rôle que lui confie la politique et la Loi.

Responsabilités en matière

financement, en demandant aux institutions fédérales de bien identifier « l'éolution des décisions en matière de solution des programmes » (p. 3) en sollicitant des établissements sur l'évolution des institutions, [d]éfendre les institutions, [d]éfendre les étayant de documents sur l'évolution des programmes et de procédures en matière de solution des décisions en matière de solution des programmes » (p. 20), la politique [de] profilis» (p. 20), la politique [de] profilis aux fins de recherche par les Archives nationales.

out comme dans la politique récédente, la nouvelle politique demande aux Archives nationales d'assumer « des responsabilités de gestion et de conservation particulières pour le compte du Secrétaire du Conseil du Trésor en qui concerne l'application de la loi. » L'application de la loi concerne l'application de la loi. Les fonds de renseignement relatifs à l'administration, à la conservation et à l'exploitation des renseignements sont concentrés dans la gestion des documents de renseignement. L'état de la gestion des documents de renseignement est à l'origination, à l'exploitation et à l'entreposage, à la conservation et à l'élimination des renseignements.

La présentation de conseils et la forma-
tion, par exemple, peuvent aider les
institutions pour la mise en place et la
tenue de « systèmes de classement »
permettant de structurer et de répéter
les renseignements et de les réserver
dans un répertoire central polyvalent
(p. 4). En fait, les conseils de spé-
cialistes, les guides et la formation
touchent à toutes les étapes du cycle
de vie des documents.

Repondre aux besoins des institutions

Chacun de ces exemples trouve sa contrepartie dans la politique: ainsi, on peut supposer que les institutions fédérales compétent sur les archives nationales pour obtenir de l'aide souhaitées pour déverrouiller les formes.

Aide discrétionnaire

servatior et l'éliminatio s'appliquent à tous les fonds de renseignements des institutions détenus dans les cabinets des ministres (p. 19-20).

La Politique complète la Loi

« Connaitre les renseignements qui sont en notre possession et être en mesure de les identifier et de les utiliser de manière plus grande et plus complète. Voilà un extrait du message communiqué par M. Gérard Velleux, alors secrétaire du Conseil du Trésor, aux sous-ministres, en août dernier, lors de la présentation de la nouvelle politique sur la gestion des renseignements détenus par le gouvernement. Cette politique, qui fait partie de trois politiques et de diverses normes prévues, « est le fruit de l'intégration et de la rationalisation de toutes les politiques antérieures sur le sujet », a écrit M. Velleux.

La nouvelle politique: un complément à la Loi

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